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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/31/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [OAS](#) [GY](#)
SUBJECT: SUBJECT: GUYANA ELECTION STATUS REPORT: AUGUST 31
AT 17:00 HOURS

REF: A. GEORGETOWN 860

[1](#)B. GEORGETOWN 855
[1](#)C. GEORGETOWN 854
[1](#)D. GEORGETOWN 850

Classified By: AMBASSADOR DAVID M. ROBINSON FOR REASON 1.4(d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: GECOM is expected to officially announce final results at 6:00 p.m. showing that the ruling PPP/C has won the election and will retain its majority in the National Parliament. Due to persistent rumors yesterday of impending street protests by PNCr supporters, the PNCr released a press statement denying the reports and PNCr leader Robert Corbin later addressed the nation and reiterated the party's commitment to maintaining an environment of peace. Ambassador and select counterparts met privately with Corbin in order to discuss the elections and address security issues - although Corbin said all of the right things, the validity of his assertions are called into question due to both his and the PNCr's past history. As of today, Georgetown remains calm and peaceful. End Summary.

STILL UNOFFICIAL: PPP WINS ELECTION AND RETAINS MAJORITY

[1](#)2. (C) Although GECOM has yet to make the results of the August 28 national and regional elections official, it is clear that the PPP/C has won the election and has retained its majority in the Parliament. With 96% of the vote verified, the PPP/C stands at 55%, the PNCr at 33%, and the AFC at 8%. Based upon current vote totals, the distribution of seats in Parliament will be: PPP/C - 38; PNCr - 23; AFC - 3; and GAP-ROAR - 1. Due to Guyana's peculiar distribution system, there may be slight variance to these numbers once final results are announced. GECOM had initially planned to have the official results announced by August 30, but they have been slow to verify the final votes - they plan to make the election results official at 6:00 pm. today.

PNC DENIES RUMORS OF PROTEST: CALLS FOR CALM

13. (C) Persistent rumors began spreading yesterday that the PNCR supporters were mobilizing and planning protest marches on Georgetown and that a PNCR group in Buxton had plans to set fires and use explosives as well. In response to these rumors, the PNCR issued a press release denying any involvement in such activity and condemning "these cheap attempts at fermentation and cheap politicking." To further underscore their position, Corbin addressed the nation concerning the elections and the reports of impending protests. Corbin's address, in pertinent part, stated that: (1) the party is monitoring the results from GECOM to ensure they are consistent with the information provided by Party agents; (2) the PNCR is firmly committed to peace and justice for all citizens and therefore has no interest in creating or encouraging conditions of instability; and (3) there is a hardened perception among the Guyanese Community that they cannot survive another 5 years of PPP/C rule and that the country faces imminent peril.

CORBIN SAYS PNCR WILL BEHAVE

14. (C) Ambassador, British High Commissioner, EU Ambassador, and OAS Albert Ramdin met privately with Corbin and PNCR Deputy Winston Murray Tuesday night to discuss the elections and address security issues. Corbin stated that the PNCR's tally of votes generally agreed with that reported by GECOM. In regard to potential protests or violence, Corbin stated that the PNCR wished to avoid trouble because "violence will put a nail in our coffin." Corbin further reasoned that the PNCR members could not live under 5 years under President Jagdeo's rule, but that any real changes in government must come through economic means, not political. Although Corbin

said all the right things in the meeting, there is reason to question the sincerity of his comments. Both the PNCR and Corbin have a long history of using force in order to make a statement. The PNCR protests following the 2001 elections, along with the history of rape and thuggish action by Corbin, are sufficient evidence to demonstrate that problems may still occur.

COMMENT

15. (C) The three days of calm that Guyana has enjoyed since election day may have made this Guyana's most peaceful election in two decades. This at least is one positive sign that the political system is finally beginning to mature. The overwhelming PPP/C victory is not good news for Guyana, neither is the fact that voters appear to have split sharply on racial lines - even more so than in past elections. The next task for international donors is to figure out how to advance an agenda for meaningful reform of Guyana's broken and dangerous political system after the electorate's apparent vote to maintain the status quo.
Robinson